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Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 01040 081315Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 /116 W
----------016638 081320Z /53
P R 081200Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6751
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USINT HAVANA
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
DIA WASHDC
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T KHARTOUM 1040

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: MOPS, PEPR, SU, ET, SO
SUBJECT: SUDANEYI MILITARY VIEWS RE HORN

SUMMARY: WITH FALL OF JIJIGA SUDANESE MILITARY CONSIDER
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PRESENT PHASE OF OGADEN WAR TO HAVE REACHED CLIMAX AND
MAIN QUESTION NOW IS WHAT NEXT. SUDANESE QUESTION WHETHER
EPMG AND ITS ALLIES WILL HAVE EASY TIME HOLDING OGADEN
AND ALSO BELIEVE ERITREA WILL BE DIFFICULT TO TAKE
MILITARILY. IN BOTH AREAS SUDANESE FORESEE TOUGH
UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE. SUDANESE INDIRECT SUPPORT FOR
ERITREANS AND SOMALIS WILL CONTINUE. HOWEVER, NO

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REGULAR SUDANESE TROOPS WILL ENTER ETHIOPIA UNLESS
ATTACKED FIRST AND NO SUDANESE TROOPS WILL BE SENT TO
SOMALIA WITHOUT ARAB LEAGUE OR OAU INVIATION AND
APPROVAL. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MARCH CONVERSATION ON OTHER MATTERS (SEPTELS,
NOTAL) DCM ASKED SUDAN PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES (SPAF)
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF MAJOR GENERAL ABD AL-MAJID HAMID
KHALIL FOR HIS VIEWS RE HORN IN LIGHT RECENT EVENTS.
GEN. MAJID SAID SITUATION HAS WORSENED FOR SOMALIA AND
ITS FRIENDS IN LIGHT FALL OF JIJIGA. HOWEVER, HE NOT RPT
NOT ESPECIALLY OPTIMISTIC FOR EPMG AND ITS SOVIET AND
CUBAN ALLIES EITHER.

2. WITH FALL OF JIJIGA, ETHIOPIANS HAVE CLEARLY WON
PRESENT PHASE OF OGADEN WAR WHICH HAS PITTED FORMAL
ARMIES IN TRADITIONAL LAND BATTLE, HE SAID. PRESUMABLY
NEXT STEP FOR ETHIOPIANS WILL BE TO COMPLETE EXPULSION
SOMALIS FROM OGADEN. MAJID DID NOT RPT NOT INDICATE
WHETHER HE THOUGHT ETHIOPIAN AND/OR OTHERS WOULD CROSS
BORDER AND MOVE TOWARD HARGEISA AND BERBERA.

3. DCM ASKED WHETHER MAIN FIGHTING WOULD SHIFT TO ERITREA.
MAJID AGREED THIS WAS LIKELY BUT SAID THAT ERITREAN
CAMPAIGN WOULD BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN OGADEN.
HE NOTED THAT ERITREANS WERE ON HOME GROUND WHERE THEY
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HAD BEEN FIGHTING ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENTS FOR OVER FIFTEEN
YEARS. MOREOVER, THEY BETTER ORGANIZED TO HARRASS
ETHIOPIAN/CUBAN TROOPS THAN SOMALIS WERE IN OGADEN. THUS,
ALTHOUGH ERITREAN CITIES MAY BE CAPTURED, MAJID DOUBTED
ERITREANS WOULD RELINQUISH CONTROL OF COUNTRYSIDE.
HE ALSO NOTED THAT SOVIET INTENTIONS WERE LESS CLEAR IN
ERITREA WHERE THEY MAY HOPE TO BE ABLE TO WORK WITH
LEFTIST ERITREANS.

4. MAJID SAID EPMG/CUBAN/SOVIET ALLIES BOTH IN ERITREA
AND OGADEN WOULD BE VULNERABLE TO UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE.
THAT IS WHY, HE SAID, SUDANESE ADVISED SOMALIS NOT RPT NOT
TO SEND REGULAR TROOPS INTO OGADEN BUT TO USE GUERRILLA
FORCES AND TACTICS. MOREOVER, SUDANGOV CONTINUES ADVISE
SOMALIS ALONG THESE LINES. IN EXPLAINING SUDANESE POLICY,
MAJID SAID SUDANGOV PREPARED PROVIDE INDIRECT SUPPORT, AS
IT HAD BEEN DOING, TO ERITREAN IRREGULAR FORCES AND WILLING
ASSIST SIMILAR SOMALI FORCES IN OGADEN. HE NOTED THAT TO
AFRICANS CROSSING BORDERS BY REGULAR TROOPS IS
ANATHEMA. HOWEVER, IRREGULAR LIBERATION FORCES ARE NOT
AS CONTROVERSIAL. MAJID THEN REITERATED STANDARD SUDANESE
POLICIES, VIS., NO RPT NO SUDANESE REGULAR TROOPS WOULD

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CROSS BORDER INTO ETHIOPIA UNLESS ATTACKED FIRST AND NO
RPT NO REGULAR SUDANESE TROOPS WOULD GO TO SOMALIA UNLESS
FIRST INVITED AND SANCTIONED BY ARAB LEAGUE OR OAU.

5. RE US POLICIES IN HORN, MAJID ONCE AGAIN URGED US TO
ALLOW ITS FRIENDS TO ASSIST SOMALIA TO COUNTER SOVIET
ADVANCES BY AGREEING TO TRANSFERS US ARMS. HE SAID HE UNDER-
STOOD US COULD NOT COMMIT TROOPS TO HORN, BUT HE THOUGHT IN
LIGHT RAPIDLY DETERIORATING STRATEGIC SITUATION, USG SHOULD
PROVIDE INDIRECT ASSISTANCE IN ITS OWN INTEREST.

6. COMMENT: MAJID'S VIEW THAT EPMG AND ITS ALLIES MAY HAVE
DIFFICULT TIME HOLDING ON TO OGADEN IS SHARED BY OTHERS
IN KHARTOUM, WHO WOULD ALSO AGREE THAT ERITREA PRESENTS MORE
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COMPLICATED SITUATION FOR MENGISTU AND HIS FRIENDS THAN OGADEN.
IF MAJID IS CORRECT, SUDANGOV WILL SUPPORT SOMALI EFFORTS TO
CARRY ON ITS STRUGGLE IN OGADEN BY INDIRECT, UNCONVENTIONAL
MEANS. HOWEVER, SUDANESE POSITION AGAINST SENDING TROOPS TO
SOMALIA OR INTO ETHIOPIA REMAINS FIRM.
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